

# ASSOCIATE PRESS

446th Airlift Wing ✕ Air Force Reserve  
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A Look Inside the Associate Press

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- 5 Crew chief puts away his tools and heads to retirement after 36 years
- 9 Senior Air Force leaders announce new core competencies

February 2003

McChord's Home Team

Volume 25 Issue 2

## 9 maintainers deploy to Charleston

# McChord aircraft, crews commute

By Capt. Tammy Lewis  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

With war on the horizon one would expect McChord's flightline to be buzzing with activity. But the hustle and bustle will actually be slowing down in the coming days. Not because people aren't working, but because they will be working somewhere else.

Most of McChord's 39 C-17s began staging out of Charleston AFB, S.C., the first part of February, according to Col. Brian Spencer, 446th Operations Group commander.

"Most of what we are moving is on the East Coast," he said. "As the airframes go out on missions, they will finish up at Charleston instead of returning here."

With many of Charleston's aircrews and maintenance people deployed and operating out of Frankfurt, Germany, McChord will backfill at Charleston. Aircrews will shuttle between Charleston and McChord on C-9s from of Scott AFB, Ill.

In addition to aircrews, maintainers and logistics specialists were sent to Charleston the first week of February to help perform home station checks and support aircraft flights in and out of the area. Nine of the 250-plus deployed are from the 446th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

"Maintainers are going, but whether or not any (more) reservists are going is unknown," said Lt. Col. Brian Thomas, 446th Maintenance Group deputy commander. "They are soliciting for volunteers now. How much of a tasking we will get is still up in the air."

Meanwhile, McChord's flightline will continue to slowly empty, with only enough airframes left to complete a few necessary missions here, said Spencer.

"We will still have some (aircraft). Probably less than 10," said Spencer. "We will still be doing our channel missions and down under missions."

Having fewer airframes means more "creative training opportunities," said Thomas. "We will have to hit the books, do a lot of mock ups and simulator training," he said.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Hanson

Senior Airman Melissa Geiger (left), 446th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron medical technician, receives upgrade instruction from Master Sgt. Jill Brinks, 446th AES instructor medical technician. While Geiger was training, Brinks was evaluated on her skills as an instructor.

## Evaluations, test set for aircrews

By Staff Sgt. Heather Hanson  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

Usually the 446th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron focuses on patient care and participates in health-related inspections. Now, however, they must also prepare for the Aircrew Standardization and Evaluation Visit.

The 446th AES falls under the 446th Operations Group. They join the 97th, 313th and 728th Airlift Squadrons in the evaluation set for March 3-14.

The 446th AES is usually a very energetic place on UTA weekends and the January "A"

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Feb. 24 is the deadline for articles in the March issue of the **446th Associate Press**. All articles and photographs must be turned in to the 446th Public Affairs office, Bldg. 1214, Room 126 by 4 p.m.

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# Readiness means being aware

By Col Tom Gisler Jr.  
◆ Commander

With his recent speech to the United Nations Security Council, Secretary of State Colin Powell laid down the reasons this country needs to be postured to disarm Iraq by force. We have all heard about troops being moved into, or in position to move quickly around, Iraq. It is a very real possibility that the 446th Airlift Wing will be involved in C-17 operations supporting the operation.

It is essential every reservist in this wing be ready to receive an activation notification. To be ready means your family is prepared to carry on without you, legally, financially and emotionally, if you are deployed. It means your employer knows you may be called up and has had a chance to make contingency arrangements for your absence. It means you have communicated with the people in your life about what they would do if you were called up and deployed.

Readiness means being aware of what the process will be if you are activated. If you have questions, get with the key people in your squadron and find out what will be required of you if you get the call. Ask questions now so that you will be ready if the need arises.

Also on the news was the coverage of the Columbia accident. I have to wonder why so many commentators had to speculate that this



Col. Tom Gisler Jr.

tragic accident, like the Challenger, spelled the demise of the U.S. space program. The Columbia astronauts were all accomplished experts in their fields who knew the inherent risks of what they were doing – and they believed it was so important that they did it

anyway. The people at NASA work very hard to make sure the hardware works and that the astronauts are as trained and ready as they can be. But they cannot eliminate risk; only manage risk to acceptable levels.

Nothing great ever happened without risk or inconvenience. What you have volunteered to do in the Reserve is important. What we do has varying levels of inherent risk. We do everything we can to minimize the risks of the mission, but in many cases they cannot be eliminated. We have to manage the risk to a level where the potential benefit excess the potential risk.

Inconvenience, on the other hand, is not lethal but it can make everyone uncomfortable and unhappy. Like risk, inconvenience can be reduced. By educating and preparing yourself and those around you for activation, you can focus on the task ahead. That task is preserving the freedoms of this great land. Your actions can benefit this nation in a large way, especially when multiplied together as a team.

## Air Force grieves for 7 courageous people

By Dr. James Roche Gen. John Jumper  
Secretary of the Air Force Air Force chief of staff

On Feb. 1, our nation and the world lost seven courageous, talented individuals when the Space Shuttle Columbia Orbiter experienced catastrophic failure 15 minutes prior to landing.

Among these brave astronauts were two officers from the Air Force family: Col. Rick Husband, mission commander, from Amarillo, Texas; and Lt. Col. Michael Anderson, payload commander, from Spokane, Wash.

On behalf of the men and women of the U.S. Air Force, we offer our deepest condolences to our Air Force family members Evelyn Husband and her children Laura and Matthew, and Sandra Anderson and her children Sydney and Kaycee.

We stand together with all Americans in offering our prayers for the families, friends, and co-workers of those lost in this tragic accident.

While we are deeply saddened by this tragic

loss, we are also very proud of the Air Force team that has tirelessly assisted in the response to this national tragedy.

Air Force Space Command units from Peterson and Buckley AFBs in Colorado, and Patrick AFB, Fla., provided tracking data as part of the accident investigation. Tanker units from Birmingham, Ala., and fighter squadrons from Texas and Louisiana supported a number of search and recovery actions.

We've also flown communications support out of Texas and Oklahoma and provided airlift support from McGuire AFB, N.J. Barksdale AFB, La., provided part of the initial response teams supporting the Texas Department of Public Safety in recovery efforts, and continues to function as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Consequence Management Operations Center and NASA Shuttle Recovery Center.

The Air Force family will continue to offer support to the astronauts' families, DoD, NASA, FEMA, and state organizations.

# Disaster preparedness has new name, training cycle

By Sandra Pishner  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

The old gray (okay, camouflage) disaster preparedness mare ain't what she use to be. Changes in training cycles, as well as some course content, have been made and are in effect now.

Training changes begin with learning a new moniker for the program. Instead of Disaster Preparedness Planning and Operations, the program is now dubbed Full Spectrum Threat Response Planning and Operations. A mouth full to be sure, but one that better fits the subject, according to Master Sgt. Ed McMillion, 446th Civil Engineer Squadron, FSTRPO program manager.

"With the previous name, disaster preparedness, people naturally thought of floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, and the like," said McMillion. "They didn't always connect the program with the man-made emergencies. Full Spectrum Threat Response should better capture the program's nuclear, biological, chemical, and conventional defense and weapons of mass destruction threat concerns, along with the natural disaster side."

In a change that applies to both active and Reserve forces, nuclear, biological and

chemical defense training will now be conducted on a 15-month cycle. Before, this training occurred every 24 months. For the Reserve, this means starting a new cycle now as people's training will expire nine months sooner than expected.

For some units, working the training schedule to meet the new timetable will not be all that difficult.

"I only had about five people I had to get in now," said Chief Master Sgt. Jeanmarie Kautzman, 446th Mission Support Squadron. "And 12 before October. After that, we shouldn't have problems keeping up with the training cycle as most of our people won't need the training again until 2004."

Another reason Kautzman doesn't expect scheduling problems is the great support she receives from commanders at all levels and squadron members. "Everyone realizes the importance of filling all the squares to stay qualified," she said.

For larger units though, sheer numbers may make it a challenge to meet the 15-month training cycle. According to McMillion, units should consider training en masse. "If coordinated far enough in advance, we can train up to 120 people at a time."

The requirements for the training sessions include each individual having their

mask and complete training ensemble. "We'll take it from there," said McMillion.

In addition to the general NBCC defense training, there is now guidance and a timeline

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Photo by Sandra Pishner  
Senior Airman Patrice Hernandez, right, and SSgt. Martin Prater, both from the 86th Aerial Port Squadron, inspect their masks during Full Spectrum Threat Response Planning and Operations training.

## ASEV

Continued from Page 1

UTA was no different in that sense. But, the energy was slightly more controlled and the pace a bit quicker Jan. 12 as a large medical crew prepared to fly. This flight was just like any flight, except for the evaluator on board.

"Every 18 months the wing participates in an ASEV that is essentially a report card for the operations function in a wing," said Lt. Col. Pete Buehn, 446th Airlift Wing chief of standardization and evaluation. "We will do well because of the normal way we conduct business. We run an efficient operation so when the inspectors arrive, we continue to operate normally and we plan to do well."

The AES reservists' operational excellence will get them a great score on the evaluation if one inspector's opinion is on target.

"I know you guys are good, said Senior Master Sgt. Eddie Mamaid, the 15th Air Force chief aeromedical evacuation flight examiner. "I just came here to see how good you are."

The 446th Operations Group normally falls under 4th AF, but to maintain continuity with the active-duty crews that fly out of McChord, the Reservists are evaluated by inspectors from 15th AF.

"Evaluating the flights in advance makes my job a lot easier," Mamaid said. "It also allows me to concentrate more on the programs during the actual ASEV."

In the programs portion of the ASEV, inspectors go over squad-

ron records to ensure squadrons are documenting their training and procedures. But the flights are more "hands-on" training.

In addition to the flight evaluations, aircrew members take written tests in advance to evaluate their proficiency.

Even though Tech. Sgt. J.P. Wirth, 446th AES instructor aeromedical evacuation technician, was flying on the Jan. 12 flight to train another aeromedical technician, he was actually being evaluated on his abilities as an instructor. But with all he had to do, he still had a little time to be nervous.

"It is nerve-wracking," Wirth said. "You don't want to be the one who is named when a mistake is made. We are nervous, but then we are still calm and doing our jobs."

Nervousness is a consideration for Mamaid as he evaluates the action in the air. "I stay away from (the technicians)," he said. "I just observe so they won't get nervous and they can do their jobs."

The availability of the C-17 aircraft for training and even for the actual ASEV checks is a concern for those involved in the visit.

"With the current operations tempo there are fewer airframes for training, so we do some training in the simulator," said Maj. Jim Wilkerson, 313th Airlift Squadron. "But the C-17 is designed so a lot of its training can be done in the simulator."

It's not just the simulator that prepares flyers for the ASEV.

"I really credit the air reserve technicians and the full-timers in the squadron, Wilkerson said. "They have worked hard to make the C-17 transition easier for those of us who are part time. Their hard work will really pay off during this inspection."



# Tax Center

## Combat zone leads to tax break

By Gerry Gilmore  
◆ American Forces Press Service

**M**ilitary members serving in designated combat zones in support of the war against global terrorism get a tax break from Uncle Sam.

Depending upon rank, eligible servicemembers can exclude from federal income tax either all or some of their active-duty pay—and certain other pays—earned in any month during service in a designated combat zone.

According to the Internal Revenue Service's Armed Forces' Tax Guide for 2002, "a combat zone is any area the President of the United States designates by Executive Order as an area in which the U.S. Armed Forces are engaging or have engaged in combat."

Current combat zones are Afghanistan,

specified parts of the Kosovo area and the Persian Gulf region. The tax guide defines the qualifying areas.

Servicemembers in several other areas specified in law as "qualified hazardous duty areas" are eligible for the same tax breaks. Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia have been listed since November 1995.

Some members providing direct support for military operations within a designated combat zone or qualified hazardous duty area may also be eligible for income tax exclusions. New for 2002 is service in Djibouti, Africa, after July 1, 2002; and service in the Philippines after Jan. 9, 2002, providing members' orders specify their duty is "in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines."

Service members who serve one or more days in a designated combat zone are en-

titled to federal tax exclusion benefits for that entire month, according to the IRS.

The downloadable Armed Forces' Tax Guide for 2002 can be accessed on the Web at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p3.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p3.pdf). It lists many, but not all, designated combat zones.

While military members can use the tax guide in preparing their 2002 federal tax returns, those who have specific questions about designated combat zones should contact their unit personnel or pay officials or unit tax assistance officer.

The IRS guide notes servicemembers normally don't need to claim the combat zone exclusion or subtract eligible earnings on their federal tax returns. The services normally have already excluded combat zone earnings from the taxable gross income reported on servicemembers' Form W-2s, the guide says.

## Prepare, file taxes over Internet for free

**P**resident Bush proposed free online tax filing last February as one of his e-government initiatives. Less than a year later, millions of Americans will benefit from free online tax filing services if they are eligible.

The Treasury Department, Office of Management and Budget, and the Internal Revenue Service in Washington launched a new web site in January featuring private-sector partners who will allow eligible taxpayers to prepare and file their taxes online for free. A substantial number of citizens will be able to use this service.

Treasury, OMB and IRS officials have made this possible through a public-private partnership with some tax software companies known as the Free File Alliance.

According to information found on the IRS Web site, Free File is an easier, faster and secure way for citizens to file taxes and will also allow Americans to get refunds in half the time, said officials.

"No one likes paying taxes," said Kenneth Dam, acting treasury secretary. "It's too confusing and time consuming. The launch of this new web site is great news for millions of Americans. Free File makes it easy. Now they can save time, money and get their refunds in half the time by filing their taxes online for free."

Each FFA member company sets taxpayer eligibility requirements for its own program. These requirements will differ from company to company. Generally, eligibility will be based on factors such as age, adjusted gross income, state residency, military status or eligibility to file a Form 1040EZ or for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Taxpayers can review the list of companies, found on the Free File section of

the IRS Web site, where eligibility requirements are shown company by company.

The primary candidates for Free File are those taxpayers who prepare their own taxes and still file paper returns. Last filing season, the IRS received nearly 85 million paper returns, while nearly 47 million e-filed returns. (*Courtesy of Air Force Print News*)

## W-2s available online

**M**ilitary members and Department of Defense civilians can now view, save and print their W-2 wage and tax statements from myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

Military retirees and annuitants can view, save and print their tax form 1099s as well.

The myPay service provides a secure way for servicemembers, defense civilians, military retirees and annuitants to manage their pay account information.

Customers can also help the Department of Defense save money by volunteering to turn off the print copy of their leave and earnings statements and checking it online. The Defense Department can save up to 34 cents for each LES delivered electronically instead of in hard copy. (*Courtesy of Air Force Print News*)

# In all his years, people were the priority

By Capt. Tammy Lewis  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

From his childhood days watching crop dusters fly over the fields of southern Colorado, Chief Master Sgt. Bill Compton always knew he wanted to work with aircraft. At the age of 18 he got his chance. Now, 36 years later, it's time to put away the tools.

He joined the Air Force in April 1967, attending basic training at Amarillo AFB, Texas because of an outbreak of spinal meningitis at Lackland AFB. Shortly after graduating technical school, he was assigned as a crew chief on the Air Force's newest cargo aircraft, the C-141A, and stationed at McChord.

"I was the fourteenth person on the crew," Compton said. "Low man on the pole. The squadrons were huge back then."

When his active-duty commitment was up, Compton wasted no time. He had competed on the active-duty Rodeo team, which had been left in the dust by a Reserve team that year. He immediately enlisted as a traditional reservist at McChord with the 939th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

He worked at Boeing until taking a full-time air reserve technician job as a C-141B crew chief.

Senior Master Sgt. Bob Faust, section chief for Blue Aircraft Maintenance Unit, remembers working with Compton in the mid-70s to train active-duty three levels.

"They would complete their five-level training in only six months," Faust said. "He is a get-the-job-done type of guy."

According to Faust, that was quite an accomplishment since it typically took one

full year to complete the training. During those years about 25 air reserve technicians made up the maintenance ART program, according to Faust. Today nearly 96 full-time reservists make up the crew. Compton has been a major player in training all those ARTs.

"Bill was our training NCOIC when I first joined," said Chief Master Sgt. Grant Eckroth who joined the Reserve in the early 1980s. "It seems like yesterday."

Thirty-six years of military service came to an end in January. He retired from his civil service position Feb. 7. He has held almost every position an ART crew chief can. He started at the bottom and worked his way up, from an aircraft mechanic to an aircraft inspector, from expeditor to superintendent to flight chief. With the many stops along the way, he has always made his people his first priority, said Chief Master Sgt. Horacio Beruti, superintendent for the 446th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

"He always makes sure we are up to speed and that we have all the information we need for the (unit training assembly)," said Beruti. "He is a very people-oriented person and always takes care of those folks working in the rain or deploying."

According to Compton, being a good listener is important to motivating and encouraging people. He believes people make this wing work and they want to do a good job.

"That's where your best ideas come from," he said. "If you don't have a good reason why something can't be changed, then you need to help them change it."

There are also times when a supervisor has to be hard. He explained that even though his heart may not be in it, sometimes that's the best thing that can happen.



Photo by Capt. Tammy Lewis  
Chief Master Sgt. Bill Compton

Retiring another chief may not be the best thing that can happen in the 446th AW, but for Compton the time has come.

"It's going to be hard," he said. "I've been coming out here every day since I was 18."

Compton plans on finding a part-time job while he waits for his wife to reach her retirement age. Fly fishing and golf will also be on his new agenda. But he will never forget the military experiences he's had here. Watching the faces of those returning during the Vietnam war, jumping out of the plane and kissing the ground, or seeing the bodies of those returning who didn't make it home alive will always be foremost on his mind.

By far the most memorable thing about his time at McChord will always be the people he's worked with and the aircraft.

## Changes

Continued from Page 3

for conducting task qualification training.

"Task qualification training is a program that had no guidance for several years, so few units were doing it. Essentially, Reservists will be required to show they can complete their jobs while fully-dressed in their protective suits," said McMillion.

As far as training content, Reservists will learn about Counter-Chemical Warfare Concept of Operations, or C-CW CONOPS.

"This training basically contains new ways of looking at old NBCC problems and situations," said McMillion. "For instance, say the problem is 'How can a base operate in an NBC environment for extended periods and still continue the mission?' The old solution was probably to have commanders assign more people to the task

or accept the risk of overworking their people. With this concept, a new solution would be found. One possible solution would be to use a pre-sectorized base to determine which areas actually contain contamination and then allowing people in sectors upwind from those areas to remove some of their protective equipment. This allows them to work more quickly and effectively."

While incorporating the C-CW concept of operations is required to be complete by October, AFRC is pursuing an extension of the deadline. In the meantime, people will start to receive this training now. Some units will also be required to complete function-specific C-CW CONOPS training, says McMillion.

The key to successfully incorporating the changes to NBC training? "Start now figuring out how to schedule your troops on the new cycle," advises McMillion. Training should be scheduled to allow people to maintain currency throughout their AEF window.

# 446th Airlift Wing's Best of the Best 2002



## Airman

Senior Airman Lindsay Baynes  
36th Aerial Port Squadron



## NCO

Tech Sgt. Mark Marinov  
446th Mission Support Squadron



## Senior NCO

Senior Master Sgt. Brenda Martin  
728th Airlift Squadron

## Wing hosts annual awards banquet

More than 300 people attended this year's 446th Airlift Wing Annual Awards banquet Feb. 1 at McChord's Northwest Connections.

Awards earned throughout 2002 by more than 40 people in the wing and the 446th Maintenance Squadron were presented. The evening culminated with the announcement of the Airman, NCO, Senior NCO, Officer and First Sergeant of the Year.

The theme for this year's event was "*Spirit of Freedom*" and featured guest speaker Brig. Gen. Robert Duignan, chief of Plans and Programs for the Air Force Reserve Command.



## First Sergeant

Senior Master Sgt. Karilyn Schmidt  
446th Maintenance Squadron



## Officer

Capt. Lenny Dahlstrom Jr.  
446th Airlift Control Flight

*\*Editor's Note: Dahlstrom was unable to attend the 446th Airlift Wing's Annual Awards Banquet Feb. 1 and was represented by his likeness (he was a bit stiff).*



# Service in post-war Korea nets new defense medal

By Tesia Williams  
◆ Army News Service

**A** new medal will be issued to military members who served in the Republic of Korea, or adjacent waters, after July 28, 1954.

The U.S. Korea Defense Service Medal was authorized by the Fiscal Year 2003 Defense Authorization Act. No issue date is set.

The U.S. medal should not be confused with the foreign service Republic of Korea War Service Medal authorized for U.S. personnel who served in Korea between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953.

The new medal will be for those who served in Korea after the

war, up to an undetermined ending date, said officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Given the volume of anticipated recipients, officials said the time it will take to award the KDSM is difficult to estimate. They said it will take time to identify, notify and award the medal to eligible former servicemembers.

Some of the actions that must be completed include designing the medal, obtaining funding, developing policy for issuance and wear, verification of service and then award of the medal.

The first three actions should be completed in about four to six months, officials said. However, based on previous experiences when creating service medals the entire process can take up to a year.

# New 4th AF Command Chief focuses on retention

By Staff Sgt. Heather Hanson  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

**W**hen Chief Master Sgt. Dennis Kirkland retired from his civilian job, he decided to move closer to Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, so he could reduce his commute. Since Kirkland planned to continue his Reserve career, that has spanned nearly 33 years, why not reduce his driving time?

That all changed when he was hired to be the new 4th Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeant. He is now commuting from his home in Ohio, near Youngstown, to March ARB, Calif.

Even though Kirkland has served many years in the military, it doesn't mean he is out of touch with the younger enlisted force. In fact, that is where his emphasis is being placed first.

"Retention of enlisted members is my number one priority," Kirkland said. "One of the biggest challenges we have is how to retain the junior enlisted and first-term airmen. We need to encourage them to develop their careers and stay in for the future."

Kirkland said there are many reasons why retention is an issue the Reserve is faced with and hopes he can help provide a better incentive for reservists to stay.

"We hope people will stay longer with better pay and better promotions," Kirkland said. "We have been concentrating on these issues and reviewing the different positions across the board to see where improvements can be made. If we don't promote people now, we will have a problem in the future because they won't stay."

The problem Kirkland is referring to is the lack of people to fill his shoes when he



Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Hanson

Newly-appointed 4th Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Dennis Kirkland (left), and 446th AW Command Chief Master Sgt. Jack Parkhurst plan their itinerary. Kirkland was at the 446th AW to visit with enlisted airmen and to attend the 446th AW Annual Awards Banquet.

leaves the Reserve.

"My replacement is out there," he said. "We just have to make sure they stay in."

**In addition, he explained why retention is even more important now than before.**

**"The active duty has fewer people and that translates into fewer people coming into the Reserve after they separate," Kirkland said. "We are depending more and more on new recruits joining and staying."**

**Kirkland came to March AFB as the new command chief master sergeant to get out and meet the troops he will be representing.**

**"I am the eyes, ears and voice of (Maj. General James) Czekanski," Kirkland said**

about his boss, the 4th AF commander. "I am here to talk to the enlisted troops on his behalf. This is a great opportunity to get out into the community and meet with junior enlisted and first-term airmen."

Kirkland did meet with a group of airmen, here and hear what issues they had.

"I can't say I have all the answers," Kirkland said when addressing the airmen and noncommissioned officers from the wing. "But I will find them for you."

And regarding the current operations tempo, Kirkland told the airmen. "Things could get better and they could get worse. "Don't get ready, be ready."

# Hobby rocks Reserve pilot's world

By Tech. Sgt. Collen Roundtree  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

**W**ebster's defines a hobby as an activity engaged in primarily for pleasure. The sheer enjoyment was what first attracted one pilot with the 313th Airlift Squadron to his hobby - model rocketry.

"It was fun," said Maj. Jim Wilkerson, who also works at Boeing as a pilot instructor. "Things like fireworks had always been, if not illegal, restricted and this is something similar to fireworks, and its legal and re-usable."

But during Wilkerson's teen years, fun wasn't the only benefit of having a rocket hobby. Model rocketry and high-powered rocketry were a way for him to participate in the era's race to space.

"It's just something that's fascinating," said Wilkerson. "Space was interesting and you could reproduce the excitement of space exploration. And when you are a kid, anything with flame and smoke in it is very exciting."

Another aspect that made it easy for Wilkerson to begin his hobby was the relatively low cost.

"I was 13, I think," said Wilkerson about his first rocket. "It was a starter kit I picked up at a church bazaar. It cost \$3 and I only had \$1.50, so I begged a couple bucks off my mom. I'd seen advertisements for it and it just seemed like a fun, interesting hobby."

Wilkerson said starter kits today can be found for around \$15 to \$25.

Wilkerson's initial fascination and \$3 investment enabled him to compete in national competitions and travel to two international rocket competitions held behind the old Eastern European Iron Curtain.

"Back in the 70s and 80s, I went to at least four national championships," said Wilkerson. "I never won an individual award, but our club in 1979 was the overall sectional winner for the year. It would be something similar to being the best team at Rodeo."

For the international-level competitions, Wilkerson traveled to Nowy Sacz, Poland

and Jambol, Bulgaria.

"That was still the Iron Curtain then," said Wilkerson. "Poland wasn't quite so bad but Bulgaria was still the old style eastern block."

Wilkerson's hobby may have taken him around the world, but these days he is introducing his hobby right here at home to his 5-year-old son, Nicholas.

Wilkerson said he thinks he can see the same fascination on the face of his son as he had when he first became interested in model rockets.

"I went to my son's class with the rockets and the air rockets he has," said Wilkerson "It was all three kindergarten classes out on the field watching the air rockets launching and they were all excited."

It isn't just the thrill of model rocketry Wilkerson wants to pass on to his son. There are other valuable lessons, he says, to be learned from this hobby.

"Working on projects, learning how to use tools, and learning to stick with and finish projects," said Wilkerson. "Problem-solving skills and follow up. Taking pride in something and going the extra step to take the time to do a really good job and not just say that's good enough."

Rocketry can also be an added value academically.

"There is a lot of math and science involved and kids seem to learn them a lot better when it applies to something fun as opposed to using just theory," said Wilkerson.

Many of Wilkerson's rockets are replicas of actual military spacecraft.

"My favorite type is the scale; replicas of existing rockets," said Wilkerson. "There's a national association of rocketry and they hold sanctioned contests. The models are judged on their accuracy, the data package that goes with it, and how closely the data matches the rocket."



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Collen Roundtree  
Maj. Jim Wilkerson, 313th Airlift Squadron, displays some of his rockets. These rockets are powered by either black powder or Ammoniumchlorate, a composite made mainly of plastic.

Because of his interest in the space program, Wilkerson follows the news on space exploration and when the shuttle Columbia disintegrated on re-entry Feb. 1, he reacted with sadness and a moment of shock.

"It's definitely a shock," said Wilkerson. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the seven astronauts."

Losing the shuttle is a stressful event for a nation of people already feeling stress due to current world events. Hobbies like Wilkerson's are good outlets for relieving a lot of stress.

"Finding good hobbies is a good outlet or coping mechanism to handle stress," said Chaplain (Maj.) Carl Supplee, 446th Airlift Wing. He also called Wilkerson's hobby, "A healthy, positive outlet."

To find out more about model rocketry, Wilkerson suggests the web page at [www.nar.org](http://www.nar.org).



... when you are a kid, anything with flame and smoke in it is very exciting.

Jeff Wilkerson



Finding good hobbies is a good outlet or coping mechanism to handle stress.

Carl Supplee





# Leaders announce new core competencies

By Master Sgt. Scott Elliott  
◆ Air Force Print News

The Air Force's senior leaders debuted the service's new approach to describing its core competencies this week. Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper made this announcement in two separate messages to all airmen. Roche released his first "The Secretary's Vector" Jan. 14, while Jumper's latest "Chief's Sight Picture" was published Jan. 15.

The competencies are developing airmen, technology-to-warfighting and integrating operations.

According to Roche, these three elements are fundamental to how the Air Force views itself, how it is viewed by leaders and colleagues, and how the service develops its capabilities for jointwarfighting.

"These unique institutional qualities set the Air Force apart from the other services and every other military force in the world," Roche said in The Secretary's Vector. "By identifying and keeping these competencies foremost in our vision, we can more effectively advance these unique capabilities, as well as the ultimate effects we provide to the nation."

These core competencies are not new, Jumper said in the Chief's Sight Picture.

"Rather, they are the unique institutional qualities inherent in everything we've done and continue to do," he said.

Core competencies form the foundation upon which the Air Force organizes, trains and equips, and form the cornerstones of the service's strength as a military service, Roche said.

Previously, the service had distilled its areas of expertise into the following six distinct capabilities and labeled them core competencies: air and space superiority, global attack, rapid global mobility, precision engagement, information superiority and agile combat support.

According to the secretary and chief of staff, the Air Force's very nature of developing and delivering air and space power are at the root of the need to recognize these core competencies.

"Our systems may change, our threats may vary, our tactics may evolve and our people may come and go, but these three core competencies remain the constants that define our Air Force and enable us to fight and win America's wars," Jumper said.

Of the three air and space core competencies, the secretary and chief of staff said developing airmen is the heart of combat capability.

"The ultimate source of combat capability resides in the men and women of the Air Force," Roche said. "The values of strategy, technology and organization are diminished without professional airmen to leverage their attributes."

Technology-to-warfighting involves the tools of combat capability.

"We combine the tremendous technological advancements of stealth, global communications connectivity, global positioning, and more, to put cursors on targets and steel on the enemy," Jumper said. "It is our unique ability to apply various technologies in unison so effectively that allows us to translate our air and space power vision into decisive operational capability."

They believe integrating operations means maximizing combat capabilities.

"Innovative operational concepts and the efficient integration of all military systems—air, land, maritime, space and information—ensures maximum flexibility in the delivery of desired effects across the spectrum of conflict," Roche said.

According to Jumper, victory in the 21st century belongs to those who can most quickly collect intelligence, communicate information and bring capabilities to bear against targets around the globe.

"This is precisely what our Joint and Combined Air Operations Centers achieve," he said. "The result, integrated operations, is our unique ability to ... bring effects on the enemy at times and places of our choosing."

By continually striving toward the air and space core competencies, they said, the Air Force will realize the potential of its capabilities.

"We can achieve success in these six distinctive capabilities only if we're first successful in our three (air and space) core competencies," Jumper said. "Only then do we bring the decisive effects of air and space power into joint warfighting."

"Collectively, the air and space core competencies reflect the visions of the founders of airpower ... and serve to realize the potential of air and space forces," Roche said.

"Our continued focus on and nurturing of these core competencies will enable us to remain the world's greatest air and space force," he said.

# BRIEF

"At no time in the history of modern warfare has a force been as well trained, well equipped and highly motivated as our Air Force is today."

— Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper

## Did you KNOW

A wealth of information for reservists and families on deployment issues is in the Individual & Family Support Guide, available from the Family Support Office.

### FEGLI has new premiums

Some Air Force civilian employees and retirees will see a change in the cost of their Federal Employees Group Life Insurance premiums. They may find themselves placed into a new age group.

A recent review of the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance premiums by office of personnel management officials resulted in the changes that became effective Jan. 1.

Because of today's generally lower mortality rates, OPM officials decided to reduce the premium for basic insurance and several of the Option B age bands and add new age bands for Options B and C, said officials at the Air Force Personnel Center here. There are no changes to Option A premiums or to the existing Option C age bands.

"The new rates were actually applied the first pay period in January, and any changes should reflect on the employee's Jan. 31 leave and earnings statement," said Janet Thomas of the center's civilian benefits and entitlements service team.

More information and cost charts can be found at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/pubaffairs/release/2003/01/FEGLI.htm>. (Courtesy of AFPC News Service)

### Call TMO for after hours travel reservations

If you need to make travel reservations after normal duty hours, you must call the Traffic Management Office at 982-3334. TMO standby agents are the only people authorized to obtain reservations after duty hours in an emergency. This new requirement applies to all military and civilian employees traveling on orders. If you have questions, call TMO at 982-7250.

### Retrain into paralegal, JA has openings

There is an immediate opening for two paralegals at the 446th Airlift Wing legal

office. Retraining into these positions is possible, with a requirement to attend paralegal training at the Air Force Judge Advocate General's School, Maxwell AFB, Ala. The school lasts six and a half weeks.

There is a minimum enlisted rank requirement of senior airman, with promotion opportunity up to master sergeant.

Anyone interested in applying should contact Senior Master Sgt. Tylar Edwards or Maj. Stephen Geringer at 982-6587 during Reserve weekends. Edwards may also be contacted during the week at (206) 464-6623 and Geringer may be contacted during the week at (360) 330-5297.

### Need for blood donations grows as stock shrinks

Because of a smaller pool of eligible military donors and a recent decrease in stock of frozen blood, Air Force officials are asking servicemembers and their families to donate blood. Officials said Type AB blood is in high demand because it is the universal blood plasma type.

For people to donate blood, they must be in good health and usually be at least 17 years old. Most blood banks have no upper age limit. Minimum weight requirements may vary among facilities, but generally donors must weigh at least 110 pounds. All donors must pass physical and health history examinations given before donation.

### Savings bond holding period increases

The minimum holding period for Series EE and I bonds increased from six to 12 months Feb. 1, according to Department of Treasury officials. This means people who purchase EE or I bonds after Feb. 1, must wait one year before they may redeem those bonds. People who purchase bonds will receive a notification of this new policy with their bonds until the

current preprinted bond stock reflects the change. For more information, visit [www.savingsbonds.gov](http://www.savingsbonds.gov).

### Some airlines waive ticket-exchange fees

Some U.S. airlines are adjusting their rules so servicemembers will not have to pay penalties if they need to alter ticket reservations because of military duty.

AirTran Airways, Delta Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines now waive ticket change fees for servicemembers on military deployment orders, while ticketing changes on Southwest Airlines are currently free.

Continental, Frontier and Northwest Airlines will waive change fees and issue refunds on request.

A number of other airlines will waive ticket-change penalties if servicemembers present copies of their military orders or a letter from their commanders, said General Services Administration officials.

Travelers should call their airline for waiver information before going to the airport. The Air Force Aid Society may provide loans to cover unexpected expenses resulting from air carriers not waiving fees or penalties.

### Association offers scholarships to children

College scholarships will be given at random to sons and daughters of active-duty and reserve military people by the Military Officers Association of America — formerly known as The Retired Officers Association.

The association will honor 100 college-bound or current undergraduate students with \$1,000 scholarship grants for the 2003-2004 school year.

Deadline to complete the online application is March 1. The association will notify semifinalists by e-mail in March and may ask for more information.

The association will award the scholarships by late August.

For more information and



to apply, visit <http://www.moaa.org/Education/2003>.

## Booklet offers help for identity theft

A booklet offering guidance for people victimized by the fast-growing crime of identity theft has been produced by the Federal Trade Commission.

*ID Theft: When Bad Things Happen to Your Good Name*, points out that skilled identity thieves have proven adept over the last several years.

It explains how they use low- and high-tech methods to gain access to personal data like Social Security numbers and credit card account information. Identity thieves use such information to open up new credit accounts, running up thousands of dollars in illicit bills, including bank and automobile loans, charged to victims.

The publication is available online at [www.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft)

## East Gate hours change

East Gate hours are now Monday through Friday from 6 to 9 a.m., and 3 to 6 p.m. The gate remains closed weekends, holidays, and down days.

## TRICARE Dental monthly premiums increase

TRICARE Dental Program enrollees will notice a small increase in their monthly

premiums, which began in January. The new rates were effective Feb. 1; however, since premiums are collected one month in advance, TDP enrollees saw the change in their January 2003 billing statement, payroll allotment or deduction.

The new monthly premium rate for active-duty family members, members of the Selected Reserve, Individual Ready Reserve (Special Mobilization Category), and family members of Reservists who are on active duty for more than 30 consecutive days will be \$8.14 for a single enrollment and \$20.35 for a family enrollment.

Members of the Individual Ready Reserve (Other than Special Mobilization Category) and their family members, and the family members of the Selected Reserve (not on active duty) will pay a new monthly rate of \$20.35 for a single enrollment and \$50.88 for a family enrollment.

## Wing postpones Employer Orientation Day

The wing will postpone the April 5 Employer Orientation Day due to increased operations tempo. For more information, please call Public Affairs at 982-2060.

## Newcomer's Orientation moved to Bldg. 1207

Newcomer's Orientation is now held in the conference room in Bldg. 1207.

## Promotions

**Lieutenant Colonel**  
Dale Huhmann, 97th AS

**Captain**  
Amy Gangolea, 313th AS

**First Lieutenant**  
Robert Dutra, 446th OSF

## Retirements

**Lieutenant Colonel**  
Larry Keene, 97th AS

## Major

Craig Huffman, 313th AS  
Steve Tapia, 36th APS

## Master Sergeant

Frank Graves, 36th APS  
Avis Smith, 446th MOF  
Karen Kowalchuk, 446th ASTS

## Technical Sergeant

Gerry Costanzo, 446th MOF  
Joven Legaspi, 86th APS  
David Olsen, 446th AES  
Wayne Pruitt, 446th AMXS



Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Hanson  
Chief Master Sgt. Dennis Kirtland (left) awards Tech. Sgt. Laura De Leon (right), 446th Operations Support Flight with the 4th AF Outstanding Performer Award. De Leon was unanimously nominated by her commander and supervisors for the award.

# TOUGH GREEN

## SHOP AN EXTRA HOUR

McChord's Clothing Sales Store will now stay open one hour later on the Saturday of each UTA. The store will close at 4:30 p.m., rather than 3:30 p.m.

## LET US PRAY

McChord will host a National Prayer Breakfast at the club on Feb. 20.

The breakfast's guest speaker is former KVI Radio personality Michael Medved. Tickets are available from the Chapel Support Center for those who are interested.



## REACH FOR THE STARS

Col. Tom Gisler Jr., will become Brig. Gen. Tom Gisler Jr., in a pin-on ceremony March 8 at 2 p.m., in Hangar 4. Maj. Gen. James Czekanski, 4th Air Force commander, will be the presiding officer. Everyone is invited to attend.



# Diversity

## Joining hands to promote opportunities

By Capt. Tammy Lewis  
◆ Wing Public Affairs

Women in Aviation Spring Conference is March 20-22. Wing members interested in attending this conference should contact their squadron first sergeant.

Women in Aviation, Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated, League of United Latin American Citizens are diverse organizations that have one thing in common. They can all count Air Force Reserve Command as an active member.

"They were selected because they have a broad base across the U.S.," said Col. Thomas Gisler, 446<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing commander. "They are running the types of programs that promote individuals to seek out opportunities, including the military."

The Air Force Reserve's Human Resource Development Council is the driving force behind the Reserve participation in these groups.

The Human Resources Development Council advises and makes recommendations to the chief of Air Force Reserve on any matter pertaining to human resources within the command.

Their overall goal is to create and maintain a fully diversified work force in which all military members and civilian employees have the training and opportunity to reach their own potential and career goals.

To help HRDC reach its goals,

wing-level councils send representatives to attend the conferences sponsored each year. Officials hope attending these conferences will open up lines of communication between the various groups and the Reserve. The 446<sup>th</sup> AW generally sends four to six participants to each event.

"I hope individuals will gain a broader perspective of what is out there in these organizations and how we can interface with each organization on the military, especially the Reserve, side," said Gisler.

The Women in Aviation Conference coming up in March will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio. Women in Aviation is the fastest growing aviation organization dedicated to encouraging young people to consider aviation careers, as well as providing networking opportunities for women and men in the aviation industry.

The Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated Convention held last August in Atlanta, Ga., was attended by six reservists from the wing. The first sergeant for the 446<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Squadron was one of those.

"I came away with a renewed sense of purpose to expose people to opportunities," said Senior Master Sgt. Sam Martin. "These

people made it through such struggles – they made it. They put their lives on the line for people like me. There is no reason I can't make it."

The connection to today's military is obvious for Tuskegee Airmen and Women in Aviation. For the League of United Latin American Citizens, the connection is more obscure.

For more than 70 years LULAC has worked to bring about positive social, economic and political changes for Hispanic Americans. LULAC is the largest and oldest Hispanic organization in the United States.

Being associated with this group not only offers opportunities for individuals, it could help the Air Force better prepare for future manning needs.

"I want people to come back and help us, as an organization, become more aware of the demographics in the areas where our wing operates," said Gisler.

By knowing which communities lay outside the gate, the 446<sup>th</sup> AW and the Air Force Reserve can make connections with people who may not have an awareness of the military.

Building relationships that benefit individuals. Maybe we're not so different after all.

### 446th Associate Press



The 446th Associate Press is printed for associates like Staff Sgt. Christopher Sehr, 36th Aerial Port Squadron.

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